

Civil Service Commission

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**The San Luis Obispo County Civil Service Commission
Regular Session Meeting
Wednesday, January 26, 2011 @ 9:00 A.M.
1055 Monterey Street, Suite D-271, San Luis Obispo, CA**



MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION
Arthur Chapman, President
Jeannie Nix, Vice President
Robert Bergman
Jay Salter
Bill Tappan

MINUTES

Present: President Art Chapman, Commissioner Jeannie Nix, Commissioner Robert Bergman, Commissioner Bill Tappan

Staff: Commission Secretary Tami Douglas-Schatz, Commission Clerk Robin Mason,

Counsel: Deputy County Counsel Shannon Matuszewicz, Commission Counsel/ Rules Negotiator Stephen Shane Stark

Absent: Commissioner Jay Salter*

1. Call to Order

President Chapman called the meeting to order at 9:01 A.M. and led the flag salute.

2. Election of Officers

A motion was made by Commissioner Bergman and seconded by Commissioner Chapman to elect Commissioner Nix as Commission President and to elect Commissioner Tappan as Commission Vice President; motion carried 4-0-1*.

3. Public Comment Period

Members of the public wishing to address the Civil Service Commission on matters other than those scheduled below may do so when recognized by the President. Presentations are limited to three minutes per individual.

Being none President Nix closed the public comment period.

4. Minutes

December 15, 2010 Regular Meeting

A motion was made by Commissioner Chapman and seconded by Commissioner Tappan to approve the December 15, 2010 minutes as presented; motion carried 4-0-1*.

5. Reports

a. Commission President

No report.

b. Commission Subcommittees

No report.

c. Commission Counsel

No report.

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d. Commission Secretary

Ms. Douglas-Schatz reported an update to last month's report: the Department of Social Services appeal has been settled; the special session dates in January were cancelled as well as the March 2 carry over date. Ms. Douglas Schatz clarified the Sheriff Department matter is still going forward. The dates are still on February 23, 24 and may possibly carry over to March 2.

Ms. Douglas-Schatz requested the commission hear a discipline appeal in the Assessor's Office at the next Regular Meeting in March 23. She explained it is a wait for the employee, but not a level of discipline where loss of money is an issue. Commissioner Nix offered to add February 9, 2011 since the department is ready. Commissioner Salter will be notified of the additional date, but if he cannot be present, it was confirmed that four commissioners will be present for the Special Session on February 9 at 9:00 A.M.; Mr. Stark, Commissioner Chapman and President Nix clarified that the agenda packet is required next week for Special Session to hear the Assessor's office Discipline Appeal on February 9, 2011. Mr. Stark requested that HR send documents to all parties next week for February 9, Special Session; Mr. Stark will be out of town next week, so email is preferable. Dates for hearings clarified: February 9 for Assessor's Hearing; February 23, 24, and possibly March 2 for Sheriff Department Hearing.

Ms. Douglas-Schatz gave an update regarding the State of California's budget impact on San Luis Obispo County. She stated that it was preliminary but significant. Ms. Douglas-Schatz explained that Dan Buckshi had given a presentation on the budget last week, and the information was stunning. The biggest shift is that California is considering major realignments and pushing work to the Probation and Sheriff Departments but we don't know how much money will come with it. The negative side is, the Department of Social Services and the health Agency continue to get relieved of money from the State. Significant cuts to programs like Cal Works may occur. Ms. Douglas-Schatz went on to explain that this may be a huge impact to the County and the Human Resources Department if there are layoffs in some departments while other departments have staffing increases; there may be a significant shift in resources from one department to another.

President Nix asked how HR's budget is not that it is half way through the fiscal year. Ms. Douglas-Schatz replied that the budget is good in HR. One reason being there was a vacancy and it took longer to fill than expected, resulting in salary savings. Next fiscal year we have been asked to make a 5% cut to the general fund. We are working on it now. The preliminary budget is due to the Administrative Office by February 3. Ms. Douglas-Schatz went on to say that she believes the necessary cuts can be made without touching staff and that one of the benefits of having Risk management is that it gives some flexibility such as tightening insurance and liability costs as well as saving on other programs such as Worker's Compensation.

President Nix asked a question about how HR will tighten insurance and liability costs and if it would affect deductibles, benefits, or if it would impact something else. Ms. Douglas-Schatz specified that property insurance is the focus. Last year HR went through an exhaustive process to identify if correct insurance levels were on all properties. One size fits all approach is not efficient. We had savings from that before, and may see rollover to next fiscal year. Ms. Douglas-Schatz went on to report that HR has a new loss prevention initiative in place; this program works with insurance to shift money to spend up front on ergonomics to prevent repetitive injury claims. HR is working on getting ergonomic work stations implemented. Worker's Compensation claims should be reduced. It makes sense to try to prevent these types of injuries. Risk management is currently working with Sheriff Dispatch and other departments with outdated equipment. Insurance helps pay for it so the department sees this as a cost savings for them as well.

Commissioner Chapman asked if the Return to Work program initiative is working. Ms. Douglas-Schatz affirmed that it is working very well. We were asked to present at>>>>to talk about why the program is working so well. We attribute it to all departments working together. It is still very effective.

Commissioner Bergman asked if County Counsel charges the HR Department to use counsel for this meeting. Ms. Douglas-Schatz replied that there is no bill for County Counsel's service to HR.

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Commissioner Bergman commented that it is policy driven and asked whose budget outside counsel comes from. Ms. Douglas-Schatz replied that Warren Jensen, County Counsel and Administrative Office agree if HR budget falls short, it will be shored up. President Nix said it is a good question, when we talk about shifting of staff potentially in other departments and the question as to whether they are still working in class or not. This causes HR to do a job analysis as well as additional workload. We need to keep HR's budget as stable as possible so we can keep employees properly represented. Ms. Douglas-Schatz agrees that the open window period is September through December. Surprisingly, there were only nine class studies, but it is a constant concern.

Commissioner Chapman stated that twenty percent of county job specifications are to be reviewed annually, according to the fiscal year 2009 - 2010 CPS audit. Commissioner Bergman clarified that this is different than random reclassification Studies. Ms. Douglas-Schatz added that it is good to be proactive by asking about class studies up front. Commissioner Bergman stated that employees may say there are not working in class if they are given the opportunity. Commissioner Chapman said the County Counsel will report to the HR department. Ms. Douglas-Schatz stated that there are cycles and if a department gets outside counsel, it costs somewhere. President Chapman said issues for CSC were to make sure parties have effective counsel so the hearing runs efficiently and parties are represented properly. President Nix stated that only nine class studies during the open window period seems low and asked if it is only open window period during the year, or if there were other opportunities for employees to submit requests. Ms. Douglas-Schatz replied that there is one formal open window period per year, but HR will still do it when asked by departments on an individual basis. Commissioner Bergman added that the employee has the right to grieve.

Commissioner Chapman added the open window period puts pressure on staff and asked if HR has talked to the Administrative Office about at least doing staff work in advance and asked if HR has had a discussion about improving work flow in HR?

Ms. Douglas-Schatz stated that if there is an increase, then we will have to push the open window period to August instead of September to give some extra time. This would be done in anticipation of upcoming changes in that as we shrink more we may get more reclassification requests. Commissioner Chapman added that budget issues may be why employees may be less inclined to bring cases forward. Commissioner Tappan stated out of nine reclassification studies, how many were identified? Ms. Douglas-Schatz stated that two out of nine reclassifications were identified. Stephen Shane Stark suggested the Commissioners bear in mind that we will not know whether the nature or extent of state cuts until there is a decision to have an election; if tax extensions are not approved, they will expire. Then, California will have to make additional cuts to the Health Agency and the Department of Social Services which may drive workload. Realignment and redevelopment may require September ballot measures to be approved. Commissioner Nix thanked Mr. Stark for bringing that up and asked what the Civil Service Commission is doing to support HR. Mr. Stark replied, that his experience in three separate counties / jurisdictions are whenever there are hard times, layoffs, two people get increase work load: County Counsel and HR. the work consequently causes work of CSC to be increased as well. Ms. Nix asked if there is anything else. There were no further comments; President Nix concluded Item 4d.

6. Closed Session (per Gov. Code, 54957.6): Conference with Commission rules negotiator regarding 2010-2011 Civil Service Commission rules update.

The Commission adjourned into closed session at 9:29 A.M. to discuss the rule update with their negotiator. Upon reconvening into open session, President Nix reported that no action was taken and to agendaize item for Closed Session Item during Special Session meeting in February.

Tami Douglas-Schatz made a correction to the record for this morning: the disciplinary appeal is actually for the Treasurer-Tax Collector's Office, not the Assessor's. Also, there is a change of date for that hearing. On February 9, the witness for both sides will not be available due to a death in the family and needs to move Special Session for hearing of disciplinary appeal in the Treasurer-Tax Collector Department to Wednesday, February 16, 2011 instead of February 9, 2011. Commissioner Tappan is available, President Nix is available and recommended checking with Commissioner Salter; Mr. Stark is available and requested closed session follow up to be added to closed session agenda for that date.

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7. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11.38 A.M.

** Note: These minutes reflect official action of the Civil Service Commission. A digital record exists and will remain as the official, complete record of all proceedings by the Civil Service Commission.*